

REMARKS

By this Amendment, new claims 33-46 are added to more fully recite the disclosed invention; these new claims are patentable over the cited prior art for at least the reasons provided herein with regard to their base claim, claim 31. Claims 15-46 are pending.

As a preliminary matter, Applicants note that claims 1-15 were cancelled by a Preliminary Amendment filed February 28, 2001. Thus, claims 16-30 are pending and have been deemed allowable by the outstanding Office Action.

Although the Office Action also indicated a willingness to allow claim 32, providing that this claim was rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of claim 31, Applicant delays rewriting claim 32 at this time to afford the Office the opportunity to fully reconsider the patentability of independent claim 31 based on the arguments for patentability presented herein.

The Office Action rejected claim 31 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being unpatentable in view of Huusko et al. (U.S. 6,397,065; hereafter "Huusko"). Applicant traverses the rejection because Huusko is not valid prior art to the present invention.

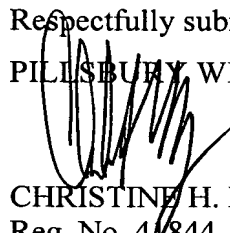
Specifically, Huusko was valid prior art as of December 7, 1999 (marked as 371 and 102(e) dates on the cover sheet of Huusko). The present application was filed in the United States on April 26, 2000; however it claims priority from FI 991466, which was filed on June 28, 1999, which is earlier than December 7, 1999. To perfect Applicant's priority claim, please see the attached certified copy of the priority document (FI 991466), which was originally filed in English.

Therefore, claims 15-46 are allowable over the cited prior art.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, Applicants request issuance of a notice of allowance indicating the allowability of all pending claims. If anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, Applicants request that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,  
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